

## Week “11”: *Lady Audley’s Secret*

[from the week “11” note]:<sup>1</sup>

some topics: sensation novel, gender and sexuality, search and research

- Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1862), finish
- Margaret Oliphant, “Sensation Novels”
- Pamela Gilbert, “M.E. Braddon: Sensation Realism” from *Disease, Desire, and the Body in Women’s Popular Novels*
- Saverio Tomaiuolo, “Sensation fiction, empire and the Indian mutiny” in *The Cambridge Companion to Sensation Fiction*
- Ted Underwood, “Theorizing Practices We Forgot to Theorize Twenty Years Ago”
- Ted Underwood, “Intro: Historical Contrast and the Prestige of Literary Culture” and “Chapter 6: Digital Humanities and the Future of Literary History” in *Why Literary Periods Mattered : Historical Contrast and the Prestige of English Studies*
- optional: Anne-Marie Beller, “Sensation fiction in the 1850s” in *The Cambridge Companion to Sensation Fiction*

### Critical Readings

- The Underwood
  - Questions? Discussion? Opinions?
  - [I didn’t do much of this reading *tbh* – would anyone be so kind as to take this part of discussion?]
- The Tomaiuolo
  - What do we make of this connection between British Sensationalism and The Sepoy Rebellion, particularly in light of the Week 10 readings on Sensationalism and Indian Readership?
  - Are we comfortable with the conclusion? I was not comfortable with the conclusion.

### Realism and Description

- [Hali’s paper on details, clues, realism]
- What do we make of a barometer when it is described not as excessive detail, but as very carefully selected, practical use
- The significance of *symbolic* description of setting vs. what Hali identifies as *clues*
  - (Often both qualities of the same description, sometimes separable?)
- What do we make of all the clocks???
  - (I find the clock described in the opening of the novel fascinating.)
  - (It’s broken in a way that’s like, physically impossible, or at least highly improbable)

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<sup>1</sup>am I correct in saying that this is not week 11, unless last week doesn’t count?

- (but also the novel dwells on clocks and on broken clocks at other points in the text too, often in contrast to some innate humanness)
- (.... Jameson? This is different from someone like Trollope.)

### Interiority

- [Keton's paper on Pheobe vs. Lady Audley]
- picking up Keton's question of interiority, madness
  - What do we make of Pheobe, her not picking up color from the world?
  - But also, how does this dichotomy between Pheobe and Lady Audley play out in male characters?
  - Which characters do or don't take on color, are they mad, what does any of this do to their interiority?
    - \* It seems to me Robert's interiority develops throughout the text as he gains *more* color from the world around him and approaches a state of "*madness*" – ? What do we make of that?
- Are the questions of realism and interiority closely tied? Maybe there are two types of realism at play here (the way Gilbert finds two storylines) and one has certain codes for madness and interiority, the other its own?
  - or, are there other ways these questions are, aren't related?

### From there: into Gilbert

- [Sagnik's summary]
- Two storylines, one masculine and *epic*, one less so.
- Lady Audley's madness as... something *other* than madness – is it an alibi? something else?
  - also can we talk about how, amidst all of the sensational violence, the domestic violence shines the most terrifyingly?
    - \* ie, Luke is much scarier than Lady Audley
    - \* Also, is there significance that Lady Audley's childhood violence is coming from her foster mother, rather than her father?

**Note:** I totally forgot about the Oliphant (which is sad) but we should totally address it. I just don't know where atm